



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 22, 2003

Contact: Media Relations
202-268-2155
www.usps.com

STATEMENT BY AZEEZALY JAFFER
VICE PRESIDENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS & COMMUNICATIONS
SUSPICIOUS ENVELOPE IN GREENVILLE, SC
OCTOBER 22, 2003

WASHINGTON -- Early last Wednesday morning, a suspicious envelope was discovered by an employee processing mail at the Greenville, SC Airport Mail Facility. The supervisor on duty took immediate action to isolate the item from the mailstream. Local hazardous materials officials and the FBI were notified and the envelope was removed from the building that afternoon.

The Department of Homeland Security does not believe this incident is an act of terrorism. Both the FBI and the Postal Inspection Service are aggressively investigating.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention tested the envelope's contents and found that it contained a poison called ricin (RICE-in). Additional tests are underway.

The Postal Service is being assured by the federal health officials at the CDC that there are no indications of employee exposure or health effects as a result of this incident.

Out of an abundance of caution, however, the Postal Service has closed the facility, sent employees home and has taken steps to conduct environmental testing. Before leaving, the postal employees were briefed by supervisors and CDC and South Carolina state health officials were available to answer employees' health questions.